



CERT Update: 7/10/07

NOTE: The information that follows is intended primarily for individuals who have completed Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training in Arlington County. While much of the information we share is universal in nature, some may apply only to active members of the Arlington County CERT. Advanced/continuing education opportunities are open only to those who are NIMS compliant. If you have questions regarding the Arlington County CERT, please direct them to ArlingtonCERT@aol.com.

CERT Opportunities

Arlington CERTers to Support August 11 Arlington First Responder Joint Exercise

Arlington County CERT members have been invited to participate as victims and witnesses in the first-ever Arlington County Fire Department/Police Department/Sheriff's Office joint exercise scheduled for 10 am to 5 pm on Saturday, August 11. This special invitation was extended only to CERT in the hope we could fill all 25 slots ... and we did so within 3 days!

The scenario for this exercise is being kept under tight wraps until the day of the event. It will take place in the County and those involved will be told of the exact location in August. They will be provided with a script to follow and/or specific instructions regarding their role. Clothing will be that which folks would wear in a public place on a typical summer day ... except we might need to cut it and throw fake blood (with a minty fresh flavor) on it! The intent of this exercise is to provide first responders with a realistic setting in which to practice their response to an incident that would require the involvement of all three groups (ACFD, ACPF and Sheriff's Office).

If you'd like to be added to the list of alternates who may be called upon if others can't make it – and are NIMS compliant – let Cynthia know (ArlingtonCERT@aol.com) ASAP. It's sure to be a great learning experience for all involved ... and will do a lot to elevate our profile among the County's first responder community. It'll also give us an opportunity to practice our make-up and acting skills!

Volunteers – and *Runners/Walkers* – Needed for 6th Annual 9-11 Memorial 5K Run

Once again, interested Arlington County CERT members have been asked to assist with the Arlington County Fire, Police and Sheriff Annual 9-11 Memorial 5K Run. In the past, CERTers have assisted with race packet distribution (numbers, t-shirts, etc.) the day prior to the race, packet and timing chip distribution the day of the race, set-up and clean-up of the post-race food and beverages, and staffing of water stations. Volunteers are needed Friday, September 7 from noon to 8 pm and Saturday, September 8 from 2 to 8 pm. All activities will take place at the Doubletree Hotel at 300 Army Navy Drive near Pentagon City. Volunteers receive a free commemorative long-sleeved t-shirt. If you'd like to help out, let Cynthia know which day(s) and hours you are available.

And while we're on the subject of the race ... last year ACFD Chief Jim Schwartz suggested the Arlington County CERT enter its own team in the 2007 race. So, if there's enough interest on the part of folks who'd like to run or walk the race, we may want to respond to the challenge and put together our own team this

year. Both the ACFD and FCVFD (Falls Church Volunteer Fire Department) enter teams in the race. Only the times of the three fastest runners on each team are tallied to determine 1st, 2nd and 3rd place teams, so we include walkers and runners and still have a chance at placing ... even though having fun and supporting a great charity would certainly be reward enough!

If we want to enter as a team, we need to include our team name (the obvious choice would likely be "*Arlington County CERT*") and team captain (we'd need to select someone) on the registration forms. That means we need to get our act together soon. With that in mind, if you're interested in participating -- and also if you're interested in being our team captain -- let Cynthia know ASAP. You must enter this race to participate. The registration fee -- which gets you a place in the race, a commemorative t-shirt, a medallion at the finish line, and food and beverages after the race -- is \$22 prior to September 1 and \$25 after that. It's a great race for runners and walkers alike ... and the money goes to charities that focus on the healing of military personnel and civilians directly affected by the war on terrorism and the 9-11 attacks. The course is mostly flat and includes portions of the Pentagon reservation. For more information, go to www.arlington911race.com.

2007 Freedom Walk Scheduled for September 9

During the past two years, a number of Arlington CERTers have participated in the annual Freedom Walk. This event was started by Pentagon employees in 2005 to "commemorate the attack on the Pentagon and honor all lives lost on September 11." This year's walk is scheduled for Sunday, September 9 at 9 am. In the past, participants have walked from the Pentagon to the National Mall ... and vice versa. This year's route has not yet been announced, but it will likely be the same as one of the previous years. Participation requires advance registration, which is free, and all who sign up receive a Freedom Walk t-shirt. If interested CERTers would like to walk together, we can pick a meeting place at the starting point. For additional information, go to www.americansupportsyou.mil.

Other CERT News

Arlington CERTers Participate in Urban Shield Decon Drill

Twelve Arlington CERT members volunteered to strip down to their bathing suits on June 2 to assist with a Pentagon study aimed at assessing the effectiveness of three different decontamination processes. Nearly 75 "victims" were exposed to a traceable dust on the Pentagon reservation and were then asked to undergo different decon methods administered by the ACFD. They were swabbed many times during the exercise to assess contamination levels pre- and post-exposure and pre- and post-decon. They also shared some first-hand observations that will likely result in changes to ACFD decon procedures, including the handling of eyewear and the need for a lead line to guide people through the fire hose decon. Way to go, CERTers! Thanks to *Gerry* and *Walter Cox*, *Judie Armington* and *Henry Howard* of the Pentagon City CERT, *Pat Lengle* and *John Quackenboss* of the Lyon Park CERT, *Deb Williams* and *Judith Sands* of the Fairlington-Shirlington CERT, *Al Thomson* and *Carol Michaelson* of the Lyon Village CERT, and *Meghan Maslanka* and friend, *Matt Whitlock*, of the Northwest CERT for helping out with this important study. We're saving the photos for our upcoming CERT bathing suit calendar ... just kidding!

2007-2008 Citizen Corps Program Grants Awarded

The Virginia Department of Emergency Management recently announced the 2007-2008 (July to July) Citizen Corps Program grants. Arlington CERT received far less than the amount requested and about half of our previous year's grant award. That means we're going to be tightening our belts this program year. Instead of offering eight CERT classes a year, we'll be offering only four (two in the fall and two in the Spring), but can accommodate more students per class. In addition, we are looking into using Falls Church Volunteer Fire Department personnel and some of our own members to teach many of the basic classes. Initially, that will likely be limited to those who have completed the VDEM CERT train-the-trainer course or who are experienced teachers/instructors in other arenas. If you're interested in being included on the list of those who'd like to help out, let Cynthia know (ArlingtonCERT@aol.com). As many of you know, we've been better than most at setting ourselves up to be self-sufficient over the years, so the reduced funding is really not a big deal. We're grateful for any help we get and will make it work for us. Onward ...

Way to go, Douglas Park-Columbia Heights CERT

At their June meeting, the Douglas Park-Columbia Height CERT decided to go the extra mile in terms of National Incident Management System (NIMS) compliance. As a group, they tackled the IS-200 course, ICS for Single Resources and Initial Action Incidents. Following the meeting, those who participated filed their exam answers online to receive individual IS-200 certifications. Even team member *Lynne Caroe*, who's currently serving in Iraq, completed the course! How's that for long distance dedication?!

Amateur Radio Anyone?

To-date, the Arlington CERT has nine licensed amateur radio operators (also known as "hams") as members ... and many other CERT members have expressed interest in amateur radio training and licensing as a means of keeping in touch with family members and others when all other systems fail. If you're one of the folks who would like to know more about this, *Chuck Norton*, Bon Air Park team coordinator and CERT radio advisor, suggests checking out www.arrl.org for additional information. At this site you can order a catalog which includes all 300 questions (and answers!) from the question pool used for the FCC licensing exam. Then you can go to www.radioexam.org and take the sample exam over and over until you're confident you can ace it. And, finally, you can then complete the official 35-question FCC exam. There are also licensing classes – which run anywhere from four to six weeks – available, but none are currently being offered in the immediate area. The Venture Crew 80 classes offered in Alexandria typically take place during the winter all-day on four successive Saturdays. If you have questions about amateur radio training that aren't answered on the ARRL site, let Cynthia know and she'll put you in touch with one of our resident experts.

Another Website to Check Out

Lyon Village CERTer, *Mark Flanigan*, suggests checking out the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services website for Radiation Event Medical Management at www.remm.nlm.gov. It was established to provide health care providers with guidance on diagnosis and treatment of patients in radiation related emergencies and may be of interest to many CERT members. Thanks for the tip, Mark!

Warm Aloha from Hawaii

Relocated Lyon Park CERTer, *Liz Fischer*, has sent an update from Honolulu, Hawaii where she is working with DOT. She says *living in a place where 90% of all goods and fuel are shipped (not by train, air, or truck - solely by oceanic ship) from at least 2500 miles away* has been quite an education in terms of preparedness. Instead of three days of supplies, Liz says the CERT instructors there are telling folks to have at least two weeks' worth – and preferably enough for a month – *because of the delays and uncertainties associated with shipping post emergency event*. Add to that the *single wall construction of most residential structures (won't stand up to sustained high winds), the majority of housing located in the coastal storm surge/tsunami inundation zone, steep mountains that gather water into narrow creeks which channel it rapidly, the lack of shelter space in non-flooding areas, and no neighboring states to evacuate to*. Arlington is looking real good about now! Liz says they're also looking closely at pandemic planning, as *Hawaii is a major stopping point from Indonesia and Asia into the States, as well as a stopping point on the arctic flyway*. All this, Liz adds, *makes you more appreciative of the skill sets we have thru CERT....and you can quote me on that*. Thanks to Liz for keeping in touch!

September is National Preparedness Month

National Preparedness Month is just a couple months away ... and the Arlington County CERT is a National Preparedness Month Coalition Member! That means we play an active role in helping our community be better prepared for emergencies. To that end, we encourage interested CERTers to host preparedness briefings in their neighborhoods (the Citizen Corps has trained presenters, many of whom are fellow CERTers!) during September and to help spread the preparedness message to friends, co-workers and neighbors. We are also looking into a program being used in the Pacific Northwest to get neighborhoods prepared (in their case, for earthquakes!) that seems a natural fit for CERTers who want to take it to the streets! If it makes sense, you'll be hearing about it.

CERT and Preparedness Supplies

Infant CPR Anytime Kit Available

If your friends and family have come to expect preparedness gifts from you for holidays and special occasions, here's a great gift for expectant parents/grandparents ... the Laerdal Infant CPR Anytime kit. It includes a full baby manikin, DVD, reference cards, wipes and a spare baby lung for \$34.95 plus shipping ... and you can even order it with different skin tones! A packet of three extra lungs (for babysitters and other family members to practice) costs \$5. Go to www.cpranytime.org for more information.

Costco Adds Disaster Preparedness Department to Website

Joni Sterne wants fellow CERTers to know Costco recently added a disaster preparedness section to its website where a number of emergency products are featured, including grab-n-go bags, radios, food, first aid supplies and alternate power sources. Check it out at www.costco.com/Service/FeaturePage.aspx?ProductNo=11224619&cm_re=1- -Right_Nav- -DisasterPreparedness.

Another Costco Find

For those who are Costco members, the Pentagon City store currently has a two-pack of Duracell crank flashlight-AM/FM/weatherband radio/cell phone charger combos for under \$20. No batteries needed and the radio reception is quite clear. If you're buying it for the cell phone charger, make sure it works with your phone first, as the adapters do not fit all cell phone models/makes. These nifty gizmos are located in the battery aisle. Thanks to the TJ CERT for the heads-up.

Have a happy, healthy summer ... and a safe hurricane season!

Cynthia

NIMS Reminder -- To be considered an active member of the Arlington County CERT, you must be National Incident Management System (NIMS) compliant. All it takes is the completion of two online independent study courses ... IS-100 and IS-700. Both can be found at <http://training.fema.gov/emiweb/IS/crslist.asp>. When you've received e-mail confirmation of completion, be sure to forward it to your team coordinator and/or ArlingtonCERT@aol.com for the CERT records.